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The counterpart of the ear-boring *mangala* for a girl was the *mangala* performed when she attained puberty. This was called '*polé kaṇḍa mangala*' or '*mangala* performed on the sighting of defilement'. The menstrual flow was regarded as defiling, and formerly a woman observed seclusion for three days during her periods. *Mangala* was also performed when a woman became pregnant for the first time (*kuḷiyammé mangala*). A woman who had given birth to ten children, all of whom were alive, was entitled to a form of *mangala* known as *paitāṇḍek aḷapa*.

A man who killed a panther or tiger had the right to *nari mangala* or 'tiger *mangala*' being performed in his honour. Marriage increased a man's status, and a bachelor was regarded as socially and ritually inferior to a married man. *Mangala* was performed to a bachelor's corpse before burying or cremating it, presumably in order to raise the status of the soul of the dead bachelor.

A man who had lost two wives in succession was ritually married to a plantain tree before marrying his third wife. The marriage to the plantain tree was called '*bāḷek mangala*', or 'plantain *mangala*', and the tree was cut down soon after the *mangala*.

The number three, in certain contexts, is considered very unlucky everywhere in south India. When a man has lost his first two wives in succession, and intends marrying again, the third wife is considered certain to share the fate of the first two. The performance of '*bāḷek mangala*' and the cutting down of the tree soon after frees the human wife from the fate which would have otherwise overtaken her.

Formerly when a man built a new house he performed '*mané mangala*' or 'house *mangala*'. *Mangala* was performed for the head of the house on this occasion. Another form of *mangala* which has entirely disappeared now is '*ettu mangala*' or 'ox *mangala*'.

The ideal and usual marriage in Coorg is for a virgin to marry a bachelor and this is called '*kanni mangala*' or 'virgin *mangala*'. The marriage rites are fullest when a virgin marries a bachelor, and they are abbreviated to some extent when a widower marries a virgin. They are still further abbreviated when a widow marries a widower, and many old Coorgs would even refuse to accord to such a marriage the name of *mangala*.

The ritual that is performed at the 'marriage of a virgin' may be divided into two parts, one which might be called the *mangala* part, and the other the non-*mangala* part. The *mangala*-part of marriage

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Four Coorgs beat the small Coorg drum called '*duḍi*' and sing some traditional songs at various points during *mangala*. These songs give an account of the ritual that is being performed. The singers also sing the 'road song' (*baṭṭé pāṭ*), while conducting the subject of *mangala* from one part of the house to another, and the road song gives a traditionally exaggerated account of everything that is found *en route*. At night, after dinner, Coorg singers sing songs about the groom, bride, their ancestors, and the guests who are present.

The elaborate preparations for *mangala* and the selection of an auspicious day for its performance stress the social importance of the occasion. *Mangala* indicates the movement of the subject from one position in the social structure to another, it marks a change in his social personality. *Mūrta* ritual is the most important part of *mangala*, and, consequently, it is performed during the most auspicious part of the auspicious day, and the subject undergoes a series of preparatory and purificatory rites before sitting down for *mūrta*.

The subject of *mangala*, if male, is ritually shaved by the barber, after which he is given a bath by three women relatives whose husbands are alive.[1] Women whose husbands are alive enjoy a higher ritual and social status than widows. Only an unmarried girl, and a woman whose first and only husband is alive, are entitled to take part in auspicious ritual. Not only widows, but also remarried widows, are excluded from auspicious ritual, but such exclusion is not as thorough among Coorgs as it is, for instance, among the Brahmins.

After a bath, the subject wears ritual garments, and proceeds to the sacred central hall (*nellakki naḍubāḍé*), where all ritual ought to take place, ideally speaking. In the central hall is the sacred tripod stool (*mukkāli* = three-legged) on which the subject sits, and on either side of the stool stands a bell-metal lamp (*kuttum boḷicha*). The subject thrice walks round the tripod stool and lamps, and then salutes the lamps and the tripod stool before sitting down on the latter. Circumambulation is clock-wise in auspicious ritual and anti-clockwise in mourning.

In front of the sitting subject is another such stool covered with a red silk cloth. An earthen lamp burns in a metal dining dish (*taḷi*)

[1] The subject sits on the floor fully clothed while the women relatives pour vesselfuls of hot water on him.

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century. The exclusive shaving of the face as distinct from the shaving of the face along with the head also came into vogue at the same time, and moustaches, which were only removed at the death of a very close relative, began to disappear entirely.

Marriage conferred on a man the right to have his head shaved periodically, and a bachelor was not entitled to it unless he had undergone the ear-boring *mangala*. The latter ritual conferred social adulthood on a male: in the folksong about the hero Kaiyandira Appayya it is seen that he successfully claims to be an adult on the strength of the fact that his friends, all boys tending cattle, performed this ritual for him in the jungle.

The ear-boring *mangala* has now entirely disappeared, and I learn that even fifty years ago it was only performed very rarely, and that, too, as a votive offering to a deity. But though the ritual had disappeared the concepts associated with it continued to exist for some time afterwards. It was considered improper for an adult to be without ear-rings, and such men were not admitted to the temple of Iggutappa in Nālknāḍ. If a Coorg died without his ears being bored, the corpse's ears were pierced before burial.

The ear-boring *mangala* was the first of several *mangalas* for a male, and the head was shaved for the first time on this occasion. The performance of this *mangala* conferred certain privileges on the individual in question, one of which being that he could have his face shaved periodically by a barber.

At the various *mangalas* shaving is a preparatory ritual act. On these occasions it is followed by a bath and by the wearing of ritually pure robes. These preliminary rites make the subject pure, and while in this condition he performs certain rites, or others perform certain rites towards him.

The form of shaving prevalent normally is different from that prevalent at mourning. Normally the tuft at the crown and the moustache have to be left untouched at shaving, while at mourning it is obligatory, at any rate for the chief male mourners, to have their heads and faces shaved entirely. Other close relatives who are junior to the dead person are recommended to follow the example of the chief mourners, but it does not seem to be obligatory for them. The mourners get themselves shaved on the morning following the disposal of the corpse; and this shave marks the beginning of ritual mourning. The mourners may not have another shave while ritual mourning lasts. In the case of the eldest son and

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Red colour seems to have greater ritual value than white, and silk greater ritual value than cotton. For instance, at a wedding, the ceiling of the sacred central hall is covered with white cloths, except for the part just above the bridal seat which is covered with red cloths. All the bride's clothes are of red silk, and according to the ancient marriage song the groom wore a red silk gown and red silk turban.

When a man (or woman) dies his relatives have to carry gifts of white cotton cloths to him. But the dead man's sisters' children, or dead woman's brothers' children, have to carry gifts of red silk cloths. Those who bring gifts of red silk cloths are considered to be closer relatives than those who bring white cotton cloths. It is those who bring red silk cloths who take part, along with the dead man's eldest son and widow, in the important pot-breaking rite (*koḍa kukkuva*) which ritually severs the dead man's connexion with his living relatives.

The ritual preference of silk to cotton is widespread all over peninsular India among Brahmins, and it is very likely that Coorgs borrowed the use of red silk from the Brahmins of the west coast. The use of red silk in ritual is not very clearly defined—at least it is not as clearly defined as the use of the white gown.

The turban is worn on very important auspicious occasions like a wedding. On less formal occasions a Coorg ties a scarf round his head. Both men and women tie a scarf round their heads out of doors. But no form of head-dress, turban, scarf, or cap, is worn inside the house. When a kinswoman comes into the house the hostess removes her scarf. Failure to do so would be an insult, as it would amount to treating the kinswoman as a stranger. Absence of head-dress indicates the intimacy that prevails among the members of a household. It is presumably for this reason that everyone, including the senior mourners, has to remove his scarf and sandals before the corpse. Such removal shows that the dead man and mourners are members of one household. They are kindred, and kinship is intimacy. When two people are able to appear before each other without scarves they are intimate, they are members of the same household. It is an expression of the solidarity prevalent between the two.

There is a great social and ritual elaboration of the distinction between a married woman and a widow. A married woman or *garati* is one whose first and only husband is alive. Remarried

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widows and divorcées have a slightly higher status than widows, but this does not entitle them to be classed as *garatis*.

The Coorg widow's dress consists of a white cotton *sari*, a white cotton blouse, and a white cotton scarf. *None* of these clothes may have a coloured border. The corpse of a widow, too, is dressed in clothes without a coloured border. The corpse of a married woman, on the other hand, is dressed in a coloured *sari* with a coloured, or silver, or gold, border.

The distinction between a widow and married woman is absolutely fundamental in every part of south India. Married women have a great number of privileges, whereas widows have a great number of ritual disabilities. A married woman is auspicious, she is everywhere welcome, whereas a widow is inauspicious, and she is unwelcome everywhere. This deep cleavage expresses itself in the matter of dress also.

IX

After being dressed in ritual robes, the subject of *mangala* salutes the various lamps in the house before sitting down for *mūrta*. On either side of him is a dish-lamp placed on a tripod stool. The dish-lamp is indispensable on every ritual occasion.

Every day, early in the morning and again just before nightfall, the housewife sweeps the house and sprinkles it with a purifying solution of cow-dung. She then lights the wall-lamp and salutes it. While saluting it she prays to the ancestors of the *okka*, to Mother Kāvēri and Shiva. Every member of the *okka* salutes the wall-lamp after getting up in the morning, and again at night.

The ending of night as well as of day is marked by sweeping and purifying the house, and by lighting and saluting the wall-lamp. The period between the ending of the day and the beginning of night is regarded as a critical time, and children are not given food or allowed to sleep at that time. This is a common south Indian custom.

It is regarded as a bad omen if the lamp goes out while a Coorg is having his dinner. The sudden extinction of the lamp indicates the approach of disaster. The diner gets up from his meal, cleans the dish and washes his hands. He sits down to dinner again a few minutes later. This makes it a different meal altogether and not the one that was interrupted.

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The goods which the bride, now widowed, brought into her conjugal house are then removed to the veranda. The widow's family friend selects two or three pieces of cloth from the widow's possessions and puts them into a box. He carries the box into the central hall and says, 'Since our girl ate here we should like to leave this box here'. The elders of the late husband's *okka* are theoretically free to accept or reject this gift. But in practice a definite sentiment seems to exist against its acceptance.[1]

VII

Coorg marriages are very stable, and divorce is not at all common. In fact, an exceptionally able and well-informed elder could not recall more than seven cases of divorce in the last fifty years. The most frequent ground for divorce seems to be adultery on the wife's part. Incompatibility between the husband and wife, impotence of the husband, cruelty, and lack of thrift on the wife's part are also grounds for divorce, though these seem to have been very rare. A wife was expected to obey the husband in most matters, and she worked under the supervision of the mistress of the house in matters of domestic economy, and consequently incompatibility and lack of thrift became significant only in rare cases.

Where a Coorg woman committed adultery with a member of an Untouchable caste she was summarily thrown out of caste. Adultery with a Coorg man was not as serious a matter, but still far from trivial. In the latter case, her husband was certain to turn her out of his house and her natal *okka* would be not at all friendly to her. If, however, her parents were alive, they would offer her shelter even though they strongly disapproved of what she had done.

The attitude of the public towards a divorcée is different from that towards a widow. Widowhood is a misfortune, decreed by God or the result of *karma*, whereas divorce reveals a serious flaw in the divorcée's character. This is natural enough if the woman has been divorced for adultery, or lack of thrift, or incompatibility. It is a woman's duty to adjust herself to her husband and his *okka*,

[1] Shri K. J. Chengappa tells me that where the widow has children by her first marriage and it is decided to allow these children to remain in their late father's *okka*, all the widow's goods are not removed to her natal *okka*. A good part is left in the late husband's *okka* because of the children. She takes to her second husband's house only a small part of her original trousseau.

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and failure to do so renders her suspect. It is fairly easy for a widow to secure a husband, while there is great reluctance to marrying a divorcée. Again, a widow is permitted to marry after a minimum period of six months have elapsed after the death of her husband, while a divorcée may remarry only after a year has elapsed since the granting of divorce. A widow is entitled to visit her children in their father's house, whereas a divorcée is not entitled to do so. Finally, a widow who has returned to her natal *okka* may marry again into her late husband's *okka*, whereas the doors of the former husband's *okka* are for ever shut to the divorcée.[1]

But the divorcée and widow are alike in this, that neither has a husband, and a woman, normally speaking, should not be without a husband. An unattached woman is a threat to the stability of existing social relations and to the moral code of the community. The widow and divorcée are both regarded with a certain amount of suspicion.

VIII

The children of an ordinary marriage are members of their father's *okka*. The fact of birth confers this all-important right on them and no special ceremony conferring membership is necessary. In *okka parijé* and *makka parijé* unions, however, the children belong to the natal *okka* of their mother, and this is only natural as the object of such alliances is the continuation of the mother's natal *okka*, threatened with extinction for lack of an agnatic male descendant.

The important fact is that the children of a sanctioned union are members of an *okka*, either their father's or mother's, and such membership they acquire by reason of birth. But the children of an unsanctioned union do not have membership in any *okka*, and they have to be given membership in either their father's or mother's *okka* some time subsequent to their birth.

In those rare cases where the existence of very special reasons lead to the children of a widow or divorcée being permitted to be transferred to their mother's *okka* from their father's *okka*, the unanimous consent of the members of both the concerned *okkas* is regarded as essential. After the widow or divorcée has been ritually

[1] A Coorg saw says that one may marry a widow but not a divorcée: *kețța poṇṇana bāvalu, buțța poṇṇana bāvakāga.*

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lead to the elders having an argument, an argument which might later split the *okka*. Another proverb tells us that 'children's play leads to the *okka's* ruin'.

Marriage is very nearly universal among Coorgs, and bachelors and spinsters are very rare indeed. A man's social personality is fully developed only when he has married and become a father, and consequently a bachelor is regarded as one who is not fully developed.

It is believed that a bachelor dies with many unsatisfied desires in his heart. While a gold coin is placed in the mouth of the corpse of a married man, a bitter fruit is kept in the mouth of a bachelor's corpse. A bachelor's ghost is regarded as mischievous, and the ghost of a bachelor-warrior as even more mischievous.

During the periodical ancestor-propitiations in a Coorg *okka*, songs are sung recounting the deeds of each ancestor. The name of a bachelor-ancestor is omitted from such a song unless he had proved an exceptional success in life, or had died while fighting in battle. Such exceptional qualifications are not, however, required from a married ancestor. A bachelor's personality is normally incomplete, and only the achievement of exceptional social importance can outweigh this fact.

Sanskritic Hinduism prescribes marriage for every adult. And only a married man may perform certain important rites.[1] A man and his wife constitute a single spiritual entity, and a wife shares in the spiritual merit acquired by her husband. Sanskritic Hinduism also enjoins on the wife the duty of effacing herself completely for her husband.

The strength of the husband–wife bond and the subservience of the wife to the husband express themselves in ritual. When a Coorg couple bathe in the source of the river Kāvēri during the Kāvēri Festival, the ends of their garments are tied together: Hindus in every part of India observe this custom when they are bathing in a sacred river or tank.

Until recent years a Coorg bride and groom never sat together for the performance of *mūrta*. *Mūrta* was performed separately for the groom and bride in their respective houses on the first day of

[1] A Brahmin friend of mine married soon after the lapse of the required period of a year after the death of his father because the performance of certain rites like the periodical offerings to dead ancestors and the worship of the deities traditionally worshipped by his family required him to be married. He was the eldest son of his father.

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marriage. On the second day the groom's relatives performed *mūrta* to the bride, and the bride's relatives to the groom; and finally the groom performed *mūrta* to the bride. The groom and bride sat in different parts of the bride's house while *mūrta* was performed for each, and when this ended the groom walked over to the bride sitting in the kitchen.

Nowadays, however, on the second day, the bride and groom are made to sit together in the central hall of the bride's house while *mūrta* is performed for each. Some Coorgs call this 'double *mūrta*'—the English word 'double' is used by them. I learn that this modification of the original Coorg custom was introduced over thirty years ago by a Coorg who occupied a high position in the government of a neighbouring province. This modification is clearly an attempt to Sanskritize a Coorg custom.

A Coorg woman whose husband is alive enjoys a higher ritual and social status than a widow. This is so among high-caste Hindus all over India, and the Coorg phenomenon may be regarded as an attenuated instance of the Sanskritic phenomenon. A Coorg woman whose husband is alive wears a necklace of black glass beads and black glass bangles, and these ornaments have become the auspicious symbols of the married state for a woman. No widow may wear them.

There is need to distinguish between a woman whose first and only husband is alive and another who after being widowed has remarried. The latter's ritual status is inferior to the former's, but it is higher than that of a widow who has not remarried.

A widow who decides not to remarry wears a uniform of a white *sari*, a white blouse, and a white scarf. None of these garments may have a coloured border.

In Sanskritic Hinduism a wife is expected to regard her husband as her deity. Widowhood is the result of evil actions performed in a previous incarnation. A widow is denied the ritual and social privileges of a married woman. She is not permitted to remarry. She is regarded as an inauspicious person.

Sanskritic Hinduism emphasizes the affinal tie in a variety of ways, but chiefly ritual. Ritual ideas tend to be all-pervasive. The worship of symbols of the married state by women, the ritual and social inferiority of the widow to the *sumangali*, coupled with the ban on widow remarriage, and the linking of widowhood to the idea of *karma*, all contribute to the strengthening of the marital

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bond. It is obvious that among Coorgs, Sanskritic Hinduism has had such a strengthening effect and has contributed to subordinating the wife to her husband.

XIV

At any given moment of time the *okka* is made up of a group of agnatically related males descended from a common ancestor, and their wives and children. When the older members of the *okka* die the younger members take their places. The dynamic element in the *okka* consists in the younger members succeeding to the positions left vacant by the death of the older members. The *okka* may be looked upon as a certain configuration of persons bound together by agnatic and affinal ties, and this configuration remains more or less constant over a period of time. The generation-depth of an *okka* might expand by a birth, or contract by a death, a segment may cling on or split off, but in the main there is a certain constancy of configuration which makes it an *okka*. The members of an *okka* come and go, but the *okka* goes on for ever. They are like people on an escalator, those on the bottom stairs moving gradually up to the top and finally disappearing.

An *okka* not only looks forward to the future but also stretches back into the past. Each *okka* has a distinct tradition with which its living members are acquainted. The 'house song' (*mané pāṭ*) sung at the harvest festival and ancestor-propitiation enables the younger members to learn the 'history' of the *okka*.

The dead ancestor of a Coorg *okka* is called *kāraṇava*. *Kāraṇa* in Sanskrit means, among other things, 'the cause, instrument, origin, principle, the cause of being, a father'.[1] All the ancestors are not of the same rank: the founder of the *okka* has a higher status than the others. He is called *mūla purusha* (original man) or *ādi guru* (first preceptor), or *ādi kāraṇava* (first ancestor), and his higher status is reflected in the fact that at the periodical ancestor-propitiations a pig must be sacrificed to him, while to the other ancestors a fowl will do.[2] Also the Baṇṇa oracle dons the upper part of his *téré* equipment in the Founder's honour. For the others

[1] Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit–English Dictionary*, p. 274.

[2] Pigs are also usually sacrificed to bachelor-ancestors who died a violent death, and to elderly males who died subsequent to the performance of the previous ancestor-propitiation. But elderly women who died after the performance of the previous ancestor-propitiation are offered only fowl.

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are identified with Vishṇu. This is no doubt inconsistent, but Sanskritization frequently produces inconsistencies.

Pannangālatammé is only one of several instances of deities losing their caste. Kētrappa (m.) and Povvedi (f.) of Bēngūr lost their caste too. The case of Povvedi of Bēngūr is interesting as her namesake in Balmāvṭi, a village three miles away, retains her caste, has a Brahmin priest, and accepts only offerings of fruit and flowers. The ubiquity of the caste idiom deserves notice: the deities of the lowest castes like Poleyas and Mēdas are not worshipped by the higher castes, and these deities bear the same relation to the deities of the higher castes which the lower castes themselves bear to the higher. The habits of some deities are occasionally explained by reference to the caste idiom. A deity who accepts animal-sacrifice and liquor has lost his original high caste; and sometimes such an explanation enables a Sanskritic deity to become the deity of castes which consume meat and liquor.

III

Marriage is a preferred condition among Coorgs, and a married man has a higher ritual and social status than a bachelor. A bachelor's social personality is not regarded as fully developed.

In the case of women, however, the contrast is not so much between spinsters and married women as between the latter and widows. A widow wears only white clothes, and these clothes may not have a coloured border. The clothes and ornaments worn by a married woman may not be worn by a widow. Certain ornaments which are associated with a married woman, like black glass bangles, necklace of black glass beads, and rolls of palm leaves worn as ear-ornaments, have become symbols of the married state. As such they receive ritual respect.

It is usual for young Coorg widows to remarry, and a remarried widow has a higher social and ritual status than a widow who does not remarry, though she does not have the same status as a woman whose first and only husband is alive.

Coorgs do not differentiate between a married woman and widow as thoroughly as, for instance, the Brahmins. Amongst the latter marriage and patriliny are bound up with certain theological ideas: a woman's husband is her god, and a son not only continues the lineage but releases his ancestors from a particular kind of hell

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to which people without sons go. Widowhood is the result of sins committed in a previous incarnation. Formerly, a widow's head was shaved, and she was not allowed to remarry. A married woman is regarded as an auspicious person, and articles associated with her, like flowers, vermilion, turmeric powder, glass bangles, and the marriage badge (*tāli*), are regarded as sacred and worshipped on certain occasions. A widow is more or less completely excluded from ritual.

It is necessary to note that the Coorg attitude to the widow is similar to the Brahmin's, though the differentiation between married woman and widow is not as thoroughgoing as among the Brahmin. But the similarity does make possible greater Sanskritization subsequently.

A married woman is a preferred type of person among Coorgs. Motherhood is a preferred condition and formerly the mother of ten children was entitled to have *mangala* performed in her honour.

Other types of preferred persons are the strong man who is also skilled in athletic sports, dancing, and fighting, and the magician who is usually also a doctor. Frequently several preferred traits were combined in the same man, making him doubly or trebly preferred. The preference expresses itself in custom and ritual.

It might be said that the general orientation of Coorg culture is martial. Frequently, customs and rites which appear to be taken over from neighbouring cultures are given a martial twist in Coorg. Competitive games like shooting at a coconut, and fighting for the possession of a coconut, and a collective hunt are introduced into every festival.

The harvest festival and the 'festival of arms' are both very significant in this connexion. It has been pointed out that the most important rites of the harvest festival are the cutting of sheaves, the eating of new rice grains, and the expression of a wish for plenty, but around these central rites are organized dancing and singing, competitive games, and a collective hunt. The incidental elements of the festival take up ten or eleven days while the main elements do not take up more than a day.

The completion of transplantation marks the end of a very arduous period in the cultivation of rice. Thereafter both the men and the oxen are relatively free till the beginning of harvesting. The 'festival of arms' comes at the end of the field season, and at this festival a Coorg resumes his contact with his weapons which

2:Emeneau L-5 (1936-1937) 1938
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marriages had been taking place for many years before that time. 601
It is of some significance too that a proverb was quoted illustrating this matter: ñaṇḍuku maṇḍe ille, koḷavēku ca:ce ille 582
'the crab has no head, the Coorg has no regard for kinship terms'. Such a proverb implies a rather long history for the [539]
social phenomenon in question. One factor making for disregard of what is obviously felt to be a rule of some validity is worth mentioning. In many cases a strict application of the rule would make it almost impossible for a man to find a suitable wife, even in a community of such a size as the Coorgs, and it must often be extremely convenient and even advantageous to all parties to disregard a brother-sister relationship which is based in no way on blood and may be felt as almost fictitious.

The age at which marriage takes place among the Coorgs 582
is a matter for statistical investigation. It can only be said 533
that girls are not married until after puberty and usually not for a number of years thereafter. The marriage song in main outline and in many of the details is traditionally fixed, needing to be adapted for any wedding only by inserting the appropriate names; it must be of considerable age and where it describes a different state of affairs from those now in vogue may be adduced as evidence of an older stage of the institutions in question, allowing for the possibility that it may be describing an ideal rather than any state that had an actual existence previously. In the song the girl who becomes the wife of the young man whose marriage is described is married five years after puberty. My informants are of the opinion that this represents an ideal, which is rather faithfully lived up to. Certainly marriages before 582
the age of 17 or 18 years for the girl and before the age of 20 for the man are rather rare. It may be noted also that among 589
the more well-to-do Coorgs it sometimes happens that a girl 582
never marries. This may occur for various reasons, perhaps the 582
first of which is that young men of the equivalent social status, 554
for the same reasons that operate in Western society, find marriage economically difficult and tend to marry at a later age than is customary in other groups of the Coorgs. Consequently, a girl may not be asked for when she is in the full bloom of youth and gradually comes to be less desirable in comparison with younger girls. When this happens, a girl of this class may decide that it is better to stay in her own sib and wield there the influence that comes with advancing years and experience rather than snatch at any chance of marriage and enter into an unfamiliar environment where she will occupy for a long time, if not for the rest of her life, a position of secondary importance. If she arrives at such a decision, being a woman of sufficient strength of will to do so, she will undoubtedly be a strong enough character to persuade her family to agree with her. No stigma will attach to her in consequence which cannot be overcome with time and patience.

2:Emeneau L-5 (1936-1937) 1938
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with both hands then a little is sprinkled on the seated person successively at the joints of knees, elbows and shoulders, and finally on the head. Then she takes a small brass vessel (called kundi) with a long spout, which is filled with milk, puts the spout through the open front of the veil to the mouth of the person, who drinks a little. Then she puts some money contained in a small bag into the hand of the person, and nowadays at least sprinkles rice into his lap, though this is unnecessary. The groom or bride then bends forward and three times touches the feet of the mother, after each touch putting the joined hands to his or her forehead. During this salutation the mother puts both hands on the child's head in blessing and ends by joining her hands and bringing them to her forehead. The mother is followed by all female relatives in some approach to an order by seniority and by the female guests in turn, and each goes through the same ceremony, the only difference being that gifts are presented without being enclosed in a bag. Widows are not debarred from performing the ceremony. If the female is younger than the bride or groom, the salutation made by touching the feet is performed by the guest and not by the bride or groom. After the women have finished, the men do the same thing, the first being the father, or if he is dead, the eldest male member of the sib, followed by the other male members of the sib in some approach to order by seniority and by other relatives and the male guests. The bride or groom is then conducted from the nellaki or from outside the house to his or her own room, and all the relatives and guests proceed to feast, first the men, then the women, and finally the servants of the house (who belong to the Holeya [poleyĕ] caste).

After the feast the guests are dismissed with the usual salutations (generally an abbreviated form of the salutation described above). Somewhat more formality attends the departure of the male members of the sib to which the mother of the bride or groom respectively originally belonged. They are conducted with music to the small pasture near the house and are seated there on mats. They are given betel and such light refreshments as sweets. Then a Coorg sword (odikati) is offered to the eldest member of this sib with an invitation to cut down three plantain stems that have been fixed in the earth. Since each stem is nearly a foot thick and cutting each across with one slanting blow is a matter of strength and knack, he usually hands the sword to some younger member of his party who cuts them. It is said to be mark of respect to offer the sword, and likewise a matter of honour to cut the stems cleanly. At present the whole affair is treated rather jestingly and it is said that foreign bodies are inserted into the stems to make the stroke a more difficult matter. The sword is a weighty and well-balanced weapon and those stems that I have seen after they were cut had been neatly and accurately severed with one blow.

585 gossip, which is now and then broken by the noisy band of musicians.
574 Meanwhile, the bride and bridegroom are bathed, he is dressed in his new
292 kuppasam (coat) with a long red cotton or silk sash round his waist and
[301] his friends fasten into it the new pichathi, a present from his father,
[405] together with a watch, and put jewelled gold rings on his fingers and a carefully tied turban in the approved Coorg fashion. A bright coloured handkerchief thrown over his shoulder completes his dress. The bride who is fully decked is left to the care of her friends.

585 In the bridegroom's house the wedding party proceed to the kaymada,
[782] carrying a light which had been kindled at the sacred house lamp, and
[354] ignite an earthen lamp there and invoke the blessings of the ancestors. On returning to the house the principal members of the family enter first into the inner hall, and the younger men follow and offer their customary salutations. At the auspicious hour, the bridegroom seeks the permission of the master of the house, and the elders to seat himself on the low three-legged stool kept in readiness and placed upon a carpet between two lighted lamps. These lamps trimmed with many wicks stand in metal dishes filled with rice by the side of which is a spouted brass vessel with milk. On the bridegroom being seated, the master of the house takes a handful of rice and
585 strews it over his head and shoulders uttering the words, "Live well; and
431 prosper well by God's favour", gives him a sip of milk, and drops a piece of money or other present in his lap, and passes on. Four men closely related to him do likewise. Then five of the nearest female relations
[576] including the mistress of the house repeat the same formalities. Then the guests, male and female, do the same. Old people only touch the bridegroom's shoulder, those of equal age shake hands, while those below touch his feet as a mark of respect. As the presents accumulate, they are taken care of by a friend who sits near him and watches what and by whom they
[589] are given. Widowers and widows do not take part in the proceedings
[777] because they are unlucky.

585 The same ceremony is gone through in the bride's house at about the same time, but women have precedence over men. After this ceremony, the bridegroom rises and takes his meal with a group of twelve of the nearest relations (groomsmen) and the Aruva. The guests who are
[674] invited are sumptuously fed in the leafy shed put up for the occasion.
[533] Various kinds of liquor are served. During and after feasting, the music makes a discordant and deafening noise.

After feasting, the bridegroom's party go to the bride's house, which is generally some miles away. On such occasions a Coorg bridegroom, mounted on a pony, dismounts at the gate of the bride's residence which he approaches barefooted. When he has advanced

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

764 and well water. The corpse is then carried to the burial ground. Each [431] funeral attendant approaches, dips his finger in the copper dish, moistens the lips of the corpse with a drop or two and lays a piece of money in it. This collection goes to meet the funeral expenses. After all present have taken leave of the departed, the body is divested of its best clothes and ornaments, and decently laid into the grave or on the pile, the contents of the funeral [783] lamp dish are thrown upon it, and the covering of the grave or the burning of the pile concludes the ceremony. Pollution lasts for eleven days. In the case of a husband's funeral, the widow with two of her own and relative's children, carrying a brass vessel and a coconut, brings an earthen pot full of water and carries it round the corpse thrice on the funeral ground, the coconut is broken and its water put into a dish for the purpose already mentioned, the widow standing near the feet of the corpse and with averted face lets the earthen water pot fall sideways from her shoulder to the ground as a symbol of her shattered happiness, and the Aruva breaks the brass bangles on her wrist. The next morning the relatives remove her [765] garments, but her hair remains. As a mark of mourning, a woman leaves [589] off wearing for one year her kerchief on the head and ties it round her neck. While in this state of widowhood, she neither wears bangles, nor necklace, nor ear-ornaments.

765 On the twenty-eighth day or some time later, as late as six months, when due honour is intended for the departed, a final ceremony, the Thithi, is performed. In the interval the relatives who offer themselves for this service undergo some fasting. They forego the early and the second meal. At noon they bathe, prepare their own simple food, eat part of it themselves, and give the rest to the crows, which consume it for the dead. When the Thithi, the great day of the conclusion of funeral rites, arrives, the whole village community is again invited to the feast in honour of the departed and for the repose of the soul which ceremony concludes the funeral rites.

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